

WORKING DRAFT

General Policies and Guiding Principles Governing Washington State Participation in Rail Transportation Programs, Projects, and Initiatives

The development of freight- and passenger-rail transportation programs, projects, and initiatives for the Washington State Rail Study is guided by several overarching policy statements. These statements address the State's broadest interests in the rail sector, and are meant to define the role of the State in the freight rail sector. Development of packages of rail programs, projects, and initiatives should both support and be guided by these principles.

1. The State will play a role in freight- and passenger-rail transportation programs, projects, and other initiatives if these actions:
 - Stimulate economic development, raising the material well-being of Washington State communities and regions, the State as a whole, and the Pacific Northwest;
 - Improve overall transportation system performance and mobility for freight and passengers;
 - Enhance transportation safety;
 - Protect and improve communities and environmental quality;
 - Improve transportation security; and
 - Address a particular market imperfection.
2. The State supports competition among freight rail service providers, and will not take actions that unduly favor one rail service provider over another.
3. The State supports private sector investment in freight- and passenger-rail transportation, and will participate in programs and projects in proportion to the public benefits. All beneficiaries should fund their fair share of freight- and passenger-rail programs, projects, or initiatives.
4. The State will work to maximize the contribution of its existing rail assets (e.g., right of way, rail lines, equipment) to meeting the State's rail transportation goals and policies.
5. The State will participate in rail programs that optimize overall transportation system performance.

